

**From:** Jim Rucker  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 1/23/02 11:44am  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

I think that the proposed settlement with Microsoft is a terrible idea. It will not only NOT curb their anti-competitive practices, but will actually further them. For example, the proposed solution of Microsoft donating computers and software to schools will eliminate one of the last places in America where Apple still has some marketshare. How will Apple compete with a company that is giving away what they are trying to sell?! Had Microsoft done this outside of this settlement I would consider it to be an act of unfair business practice worthy of investigation, but to make it a part of an anti-trust settlement is ludicrous!

As a software developer I know that if I have an idea for an incredible application that will change the world I won't make a penny on it. The reason why is that if I develop the product for Windows and Microsoft sees what a great idea it is they will make their own version. Then they will integrate it into the operating system and give it away for free. Their teams of lawyers will prevent me from receiving any settlement from them and Microsoft in the past has all but ignored judicial decisions, amazingly without recourse. Their marketing department will make it appear as though they invented the idea and that my product is a blatant rip-off. Knowing this has caused me to cancel several projects that I have started since without a financial reward I would not be able to entice any investors to fund the creation of this software. There is no doubt in my mind that Microsoft has shown little innovation in their entire company history, but has instead acted in a predatory and destructive manner. This antitrust lawsuit is the chance to finally slow Microsoft's anti-competitive behavior but unfortunately I read day after day of Microsoft's undermining the whole process through proposed settlement that cause more harm than good being given the nod by people that either don't understand the issue or have been unduly influenced by Microsoft (such as the lawyers who have received floods of mail and email that has its origin from Microsoft). I hope this email is used to help influence those involved in the Microsoft antitrust suit into imposing more effective legislation.

Sincerely  
James D Rucker